

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

These remarks are made in response to the Office Action of July 23, 2007 (Office Action). As this response is timely filed within the 3-month shortened statutory period, no fee is believed due. However, the Examiner is expressly authorized to charge any deficiencies to Deposit Account No. 50-0951.

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 6-20, and 24-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Landon, *et al.*, "Deploying Lotus Sametime on the eServer iSeries Server," Redbooks, June 2002 (hereinafter Landon). Claims 1, 3-5, 19, and 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Published Patent Application 2004/0267887 to Berger, *et al.* (hereinafter Berger). Additionally, Claims 16-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejections, Applicants nevertheless have amended each of the independent claims so as to expedite prosecution of the present application by emphasizing certain aspects of the invention. Additionally, Claims 19-33 have been amended to address the stated rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Applicants respectfully note, however, that the amendments are not intended as, and should not be interpreted as, the surrender of any subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully reserve the right to present the original version of any of the amended claims in any future divisional or continuation applications from the present application.

The claim amendments, as discussed herein, are fully supported throughout the Specification. No new matter has been introduced by virtue of any of the claim amendments.

Claim Amendments

The claims recite features for enhancing collaborative computing with customizable personnel searches. As described in the Specification, collaborative computing can provide presence awareness features that indicate which users and/or user groups are online. Collaborative computing also can enable searches to be performed against one or more record sources, such as a company intranet directory, a personal contact directory, and other such source. As a result of such searching, online entities satisfying the search pattern can be recognized, and the search results can be displayed to a user so that the user can directly initialize any of a variety of software-enhanced communications between the user and an online entity included in the search results.

One additional aspect of the present invention is a search limitation feature. This particular feature, as recited in Claims 1, 12, 16, 19, 30, 34, and 35, allows one or more search limitations to be specified such that searching is performed subject to at least one search limitation. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0031], lines 1-3.) More particularly, a search limitation can prevent users, other than those users belonging to a predetermined class of users, from accessing data records pertaining to one or more predetermined online entities. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0031], lines 3-7.) A search limitation additionally or alternately can prevent users – again, other than those belonging to a predetermined class of users – from receiving data indicating an online presence of one or more predetermined online entities. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0031], lines 7-11.) This search limitation feature can protect the privacy of online entities. (See, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0031], lines 1-3.) The search limitation feature also can permit certain online entities to be selectively unlisted with respect to a particular collaboration application (see, e.g., Specification, paragraph [0031], lines 11-13).

Claims 16-35 Present Patentable Subject Matter

As noted already, Claims 16-35 were rejected as being directed to non-statutory matter. Firstly, with respect to independent Claim 16, the claim explicitly recites, for example, a collaboration server. The term server has a long-established and pervasive use in the relevant fields of art. The term, as commonly used by those of ordinary skill in the art, encompasses a specific type of "computer" or "device." (See, e.g., www.webopedia.com, which defines a server as "[a] computer or device on a network that manages network resources.") (Emphasis added.) That is, the term is widely used to denote a physical device. Applicants respectfully submit that it would be unfair, and indeed improper, to selectively ignore this widely-accepted use of the term "server" in the present context.

In a related vein, independent Claims 34 and 35 both recite physical features in statutorily-recognized "means-for" language. Properly interpreted, the claim must be read to encompass those physical features described in the written description, which, as already noted, include a physical device such as a server or other type of computer.

Independent Claims 19 and 30, as amended, are both directed to computer-readable storages, which by any definition are physical objects. More fundamentally, however, the claims recite steps that impart functionality to a computer; that is, they each clearly recite *functional* descriptive material on a physical, storage medium. It is well-established by past and present practice of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office that claims directed to code sections comprising functional descriptive material in a computer-readable storage medium are within statutory subject matter.

Moreover, the searching, presenting, and other recited functions performed by a computer under the direction of the code clearly produce the type of useful, concrete, and tangible results that have long been recognized by the courts as being indicia of such

patentable subject matter. (See, e.g., *AT&T Corp. v. Excel Communications, Inc.*, 172 F.3d 1352 (Fed. Cir. 1999), holding that adding a primary interexchange carrier ("PIC") indicator to a message record for long-distance telephone calls evinced a useful, concrete, and tangible result.) Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdraw of each of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

The Claims Define Over The Cited References

Applicants respectfully submit that neither of the cited references teach, expressly or inherently, every feature recited in amended Claims 1, 12, 16, 19, 30, 34, and 35. For example, neither reference teaches a search limitation feature of the type recited in the claims. Specifically, the references fail to teach, or even suggest, **specifying at least one search limitation that prevents users, other than users belonging to a predetermined class of users, from accessing data records pertaining to one or more predetermined online entities**, as explicitly recited in Claims 1, 12, 16, 19, 30, 34, and 35. Similarly, neither of the cited references teaches or suggests **specifying at least one search limitation that prevents users, other than users belonging to a predetermined class of users, from receiving data indicating an online presence of one or more predetermined online entities**, as also explicitly recited in Claims 1, 12, 16, 19, 30, 34, and 35.

Accordingly, neither the cited references nor any other reference of record teaches or suggests every feature recited in Claims 1, 12, 16, 19, 30, 34, and 35. Applicants respectfully submit, therefore, that Claims 1, 12, 16, 19, 30, 34, and 35 each define over the prior art. Applicants further respectfully submit that, whereas each of the remaining claims depends from Claim 1, 12, 16, 19, 30, 34, or 35 while reciting additional features, each of the dependent claims likewise defines over the prior art.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that this application is now in full condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any matter within this Amendment, or if the Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,

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